

ISSUE 10 - 2017/18

# BACKCHAT



Information, news and views from children and young people involved in Camden services

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GET INVOLVED!

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Backchat online recent photos



shorter meetings



[backchatonline.org.uk](http://backchatonline.org.uk)



## What have young people been involved in since the last issue?

### The Children in Care Council (CiCC)

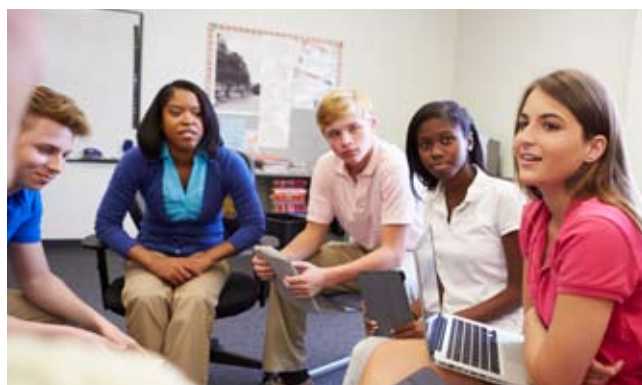
The CiCC provides a voice for children and young people in care.



**Making decisions** – Young people have been involved in making decisions on issues affecting children and young people in care and other young people in Camden. This included changes to information about looked after children review meetings, a review of the Backchat website pages and consultation with looked after children and care leavers on priority areas for the CiCC to focus on.

**Speaking at council meetings** – Young people from the CiCC attended the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee in November 2017; they presented findings of the Young Inspectors research. Young people who are asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors have spoken about their experience of social care services at the Full Council meeting in November 2017.

**Attending Corporate Parenting Board meetings** – this is one of the main aspects of the CiCC's work and it is an opportunity to be involved in making decisions about services. At these meetings, young people talk to councillors, the Director of Children's Safeguarding and Social Work, Executive Director of Supporting People and senior managers about their experience of the services, what is working well and what needs improving.



### Keeping young people safe

Our Camden Youth Safety Taskforce held its inaugural event for families, young people and local politicians in December 2017. The council-led taskforce is supported by the police and other local partners and has been established in response to the recent rise in knife crime locally and across London.

Find out more:  
[camden.gov.uk/youthsafetytaskforce](http://camden.gov.uk/youthsafetytaskforce)



These are some of the activities and events young people have been involved in over the past year.

### New Youth MP

March 2018

The Youth MP and two Deputy Youth MPs, who have a two-year term, are the voice for Camden young people, putting forward their interests in local decision-making, as well as nationally through the UK Youth Parliament.

They work closely with Camden Youth Council, helping to organise or speak at events such as Shout Out, as well as campaigning on issues important to young people locally and nationally.

All 11 to 19-year-olds who live in Camden, go to a local school or college, or work in the borough, can vote in our Youth MP Election from 19 to 29 March.

The candidates are aged 13 to 19. You can find out who they are and how to vote by visiting the website below – or look out for details in your school or youth centre.

Find out more: [camden.gov.uk/youthcouncil](http://camden.gov.uk/youthcouncil)



### Shout out

November 2017

Young people said preventing cuts to youth services was their top priority at our Camden Shout Out event, organised by Camden Youth Council and the Youth MP. The event was held at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London in Granary Square. More than 100 young people had their say on issues ranging from safety on the street and 'hidden' illnesses, such as mental health problems, to future educational and career paths.



### Youth Question time

November 2017

Safety on the streets in Camden, youth services and preventing loneliness were some of the key topics debated at the Youth Question time in November 2017 at the Town Hall. Young people had a chance to ask questions of councillors and the council leader. The event was organised by Camden Youth Council and Camden Youth MP.

### For more information

Find out more about youth democracy and the Camden Youth MP Election: visit [camden.gov.uk/youthcouncil](http://camden.gov.uk/youthcouncil) or [@camdenyouthmp](https://twitter.com/camdenyouthmp)

Find out about your local youth centre or about other local youth services: visit [camden.gov.uk/youthservices](http://camden.gov.uk/youthservices)



## Takeover Day

### The Takeover Challenge – November 2017

Takeover Day is a national event led by the Children's Commissioner for England, which young people from Camden have been involved in since 2012.

It gives children and young people the chance to work with adults and get involved in decision-making about services.

Over 60 pupils from Camden primary and secondary schools took part in workshops, presentations and a question and answer session at Camden offices at 5 Pancras Square and the Town Hall.

Young people taking part in the day were involved in sharing their views and making decisions about:

- Camden Plan 2025
- TfL STARS safe and sustainable travel programme for schools
- Health and wellbeing
- Peer support
- Staying safe



### Takeover Challenge

## Young Inspectors programme

### Individual evaluation of the inspection by Young Inspectors

The project involves young people undertaking inspection of services in order to put forward their own recommendations aimed at improving services.

Every year, a team of Young Inspectors research the views of other service users and professionals about the services provided by the council and partner agencies to safeguard children.

In 2017 the team inspected the Children and Young People's Disability service and made 8 practical recommendations for service improvement.

Their findings result in real changes and improvements to the service.



TEAM LEADER

Jenny

This project made me aware of the difficulties that many young disabled children have to face in their everyday lives. I think that we all need to be more aware of that.



What I enjoyed most was visiting activity centres for children with disabilities and taking photographs of these places. I found it hard to concentrate and on what people were saying.



JAMES

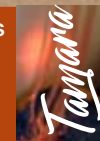
KYLE

What I most enjoyed about the project was the people I got to work with on the team. They were all vibrant, fun and interesting people who all contributed something to the project.

VIVIANE

This project has given me a different perception of myself. I have learnt that having patience and helping others to build their confidence is the best way to work together and to achieve the aim of the project.

I most enjoyed asking questions at the meetings with service managers. This is the first time I have been involved in a project about the social work service and young people with disabilities.



The most enjoyable part of the Young Inspectors project was getting to meet new people and getting to work like a professional. It has opened my eyes to dealing with disability issues.



ROSIE

DANI

The most enjoyable part of the project was to be able to contribute to society by helping young people with disabilities. It helped me to think for myself.

Mohammed

This project has changed me 100% as a person. It is wonderful to know that there are services and professionals to whom disabled young people can go to for help.

You can see the full report at [backchatonline.org.uk](http://backchatonline.org.uk) – search for Young Inspectors Reports



## MEET THE MEMBERS OF THE



## Children in Care Council



I am 15 years old. I have been involved in the Children in Care Council for three years. I have been able to indulge in various experiences since joining the CiCC, ranging from meetings with Ofsted inspectors, to aiding big events like the Awards Ceremony held in the Arsenal Stadium in 2017. I enjoy being involved with Camden CiCC because it allows me to embrace different cultures and ethnicities. My involvement with the CiCC has also allowed me to come out of my comfort zone and become more social with other people.

### What is the Children in Care Council?

The Children in Care Council is for children and young people who are in care. Young people meet once a month and meetings are open to all looked after children and care leavers. If your placement is not in Camden and you would like to give your views or feedback, please send a message to the CiCC via **Backchat Online**, or email Elzbieta Chandrasena at [elzbieta.chandrasena@camden.gov.uk](mailto:elzbieta.chandrasena@camden.gov.uk)

Since being in the CiCC, what I have enjoyed the most is meeting the Mayor and going to London Zoo because these were opportunities that I had never experienced before. I am currently studying for my GCSEs, which are coming up next year. I really love travelling as I get to go to new places; for example, I went to the Black Forest in Germany and also visited France.

Leevon

### New London CiCC group

15 February 2018 at City Hall in London (the base for the Mayor of London!)

This is a new opportunity for young people in care and care leavers to meet young people from other parts of London. This new group brings young people from all of London together to share views and ideas about the topics which affect them and to be able to use their collective voice in campaigning for change and ensuring young people's voices are heard.

Join the **new** group for children in care and care leavers

If you would like to get involved, find out more or book a place, please email: [elzbieta.chandrasena@camden.gov.uk](mailto:elzbieta.chandrasena@camden.gov.uk), or speak to your social worker

## Backchat Online photo gallery



See these photos and many more on **Backchat Online**  
[backchatonline.org.uk/photo\\_galleries](http://backchatonline.org.uk/photo_galleries)